

Mahakam

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Mahakam is both a mountain range and a kingdom in the [Northern Realms](#).

Bordered to the West by [Temeria](#) and [Sodden](#) and to the East by [Aedirn](#) and [Lyria](#) and [Rivia](#). It is inhabited by [dwarves](#), [gnomes](#), [halflings](#), [Bobolaks](#) and some [vrans](#).

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Mahakam



General Information

Type of Government	Elective Monarchy
Status	Vassal state of Temeria
Ruler	Temerian Monarchy (<i>de iure</i>) Elder of Mahakam (<i>de facto</i>)

Governmental Information

Head of Government	Clan Council
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Societal Information

Capital	Mount Carbon
Official language	Dwarvish Gnomish Bobolak language Common Speech
Demonym	Mahakaman (games) ^[1]
Currency	Holey gulden ^[2]

Map(s)

World



Area



History

First Settlers

The first civilization to move into the Mahakam Massif was that of the [gnomes](#). They built cities and settlements in the mountain range but did not establish a single state. The commune made decisions through people's assemblies led by a well-respected individual from the community.^[3] Between the [3rd and 2nd millennium BR](#), a second group arrived on the continent and moved into the mountain range — the dwarves. When the dwarves and gnomes met, they took to one another and a kinship developed. Both races lived together in the mountain range and side by side in their cities.

Unlike the gnomes, the dwarves did establish a state. They founded the Kingdom of Mahakam, which encompassed the entire Mahakam mountain range. They further established themselves by founding additional settlements and building cities. The capital of the realm became [Mount Carbon](#), inhabited by both gnomes and dwarves.^[3]

Due to the dwarves' mining operations of precious metals and gems, they came into conflict with the mountain range's [dragons](#) and others drawn to the dwarves' riches. To combat this, the dwarves took to hunting the dragons within their territories.^[3] The dwarven state established decent relations with the already existing societies of the [Bobolaks](#) and the [Vrans](#).^[4] They also encountered the [Dryads](#), but the dwarves deemed them savage barbarians.^[5]



The dwarves of Mahakam also established several mining colonies in the [North](#), one of them being [Vergen](#).^[6]

Arrival of the Elves

Eventually, white ships appeared on the shores of the continent. These ships marked the arrival of the [Aen Seidhe](#). The dwarves and gnomes of Mahakam watched as the elves spread across the continent. While the elves preferred to

live in the lowlands, they did engage in wars with the dwarves, although these were never wars of extermination.^{[3][5][7]}

At this time, the Mahakamans also opened their realm to displaced Bobolaks, who were being pushed from their homes by the elves. The Bobolaks helped repel elven attacks^[3] and built charming villages in the dwarven realm, where they thrived.^[8] They were regarded as equals by the dwarves and gnomes.^[4]

Conjunction of the Spheres

After the [Conjunction of the Spheres](#), a fourth group was welcomed into the dwarven realm — the [halflings](#), who had arrived on the continent during the Conjunction. Some of them settled in the mountain valleys. As in other regions, they built farms and practiced animal husbandry.^[3]

Another group of arrivals came with the [First Landing](#) — the [Nordlings](#). The Mahakamans watched as humans spread across and conquered the North, bringing devastation to the Vrans, Bobolaks, and elves. The mountain kingdom once again opened up to fleeing Bobolaks, and even some Vrans found sanctuary.^[4]

Isolation

Around the 1060s, a new [Elder-in-Chief](#), [Brouver Hoog](#), was elected to lead the dwarven kingdom. At the same time, a renewed effort by the elven youth under the leadership of [Aelirenn](#) sought to launch one last attempt to rid the continent of humans. An emissary from Aelirenn arrived in Mahakam, spoke of solidarity between the [Elder Races](#), and urged the dwarves to join the fight. Brouver listened and then had the emissary thrown out of his realm, ordering all access to Mahakam to be closed — isolating it from the rest of the continent.^[9]

The gnomes and dwarves retreated high and deep into their mountain strongholds, cutting themselves off from the halfling farms in the Mahakaman valleys. The [Temerian](#) king, [Lambert of Temeria](#), used this as an opportunity to force the Mahakamans into submission. After the eleven-year-long [Famine War](#), the Elder submitted to Temerian rule, making Mahakam a vassal of the Temerian crown.^[3]

Although the mountainous kingdom in reality remained entirely self-ruling,^{[2][3]} this did not mean Mahakam emerged from its isolation. The dwarves remained

secluded for a century, only reopening to the outside world after Brouver Hoog was pressured into it by the various [clans](#).^{[2][9]} By this time, they had also lost their mining colonies outside of Mahakam.^[6]

The Great Airin'-Out

When Mahakam opened its borders exclusively to traders, the dwarves eagerly awaited news of the elven-human conflict. What they heard was that Aelirenn's forces had suffered utter defeat. While Mahakam had saved itself from a likely similar fate, this nevertheless left a sense of guilt among its inhabitants.^[9]

While traders and rulers were pleased with Mahakam exports, weapon manufacturers in places like [Rivia](#) were none too happy, as they could not compete with dwarven arms. Mahakam adopted a neutral position toward all human conflicts. When King [Foltest](#) of Temeria attempted to collect taxes from Mahakam, the Elder responded by putting the collectors into barrels and rolling them off a mountainside. Foltest, furious, began assembling an army for a punitive expedition, but was talked down by [Demavend III](#) of [Aedirn](#). As thanks for preventing the conflict, Demavend was gifted the [Leaden Ring](#).^[2]

The dwarves also made it known that any attack on Mahakam would result in the destruction or flooding of their mines, ensuring that no conqueror would gain the mountain's riches.^[3] Unbeknownst to the rest of the continent, they also hoarded all the valuables and gold acquired through trade in large vaults. Should they be attacked, they planned to spend all of it at once, causing the human economies to collapse.^[2]

Northern wars

From [1263](#), following the [First Northern War](#), a great influx of cheap [Nilfgaardian](#) goods began to enter Temeria, in part through Mahakam, greatly affecting the kingdom's economy. King [Foltest](#) of Temeria knew he couldn't close the borders with Mahakam, as it would cause an outcry from the Merchant's Guild and severely damage trade relations.^[5]

During the [Second Northern War](#), Queen [Meve](#) of [Lyria and Rivia](#) passed through Mahakam seeking allies in her struggle against Nilfgaard. While [Brouver](#) refused to support her directly, he sent troops with her as "volunteers" after a [Scoia'tael](#) attack inside Mahakam.^[2] While a war with Temeria had been avoided years

earlier, the Mahakam foothills were targeted by the Temerian [Blue Stripes](#) under the command of [Vernon Roche](#).^[6] Meanwhile, Mahakaman youth were becoming increasingly discontent with Brouver's rule, viewing him as too conservative and stubborn. A group of young dwarves even joined the Scoia'tael and attempted to recruit more followers within Mahakam before they were apprehended.^[2]

Later, during the [Battle of Brenna](#) and at Maribor, the [Mahakam Volunteer Army](#) proved themselves and provided invaluable support to the Nordling victory. After the war, [Yarpen Zigrin](#) was elected Vice Elder-in-Chief.^[10]

Society

Demographics

The largest group inhabiting Mahakam are the dwarves. They are organized into clans, with each clan controlling a part of the mountain range where they maintain their clan seat, settlements, and mines. The second largest group are the gnomes, who rarely venture outside the mountain cities where they have their workshops. Gnomes are organized into communes, where decisions are made through people's assemblies. The halflings and Bobolaks inhabit the valleys of Mahakam.^[3]

State Structure

Although the [kings](#) of Temeria are the titular lords of Mahakam, in practice its dwarves and gnomes maintain a high degree of autonomy. The real power lies in the hands of the Elder-in-Chief, who is elected for life by the Clan Council. While the Elder-in-Chief rules with absolute authority, the clans exert significant influence over decision-making. Though the Elder can act unilaterally, he often chooses to follow the counsel or pressure of the clans. Each clan is governed by its own elders, and the Council of Clans consists of the elders from each clan. It appears that decisions made by the council require unanimity, as debates can last a long time before a conclusion is reached. When Meve passed through Mahakam, a single clan reportedly had the power to prevent her expulsion from the kingdom.

While all dwarves fall under the Elder-in-Chief's authority, this is more theoretical when it comes to the gnomes. Although they generally respect the

Elder's rule, they can evade punishment by citing specific passages from the Foredwaves' Codex, particularly when the law in question pertains only to dwarves.^[2]

Culture

Language

While [Dwarvish](#) was once the primary language of the dwarves, it has since become more of a totemic language. The dwarves have adopted [Common Speech](#) for communication both among themselves and with others. The gnomes still speak in [Gnomish](#) with each other, but use Common Speech when communicating with outsiders. The Bobolaks likewise maintain their own [language](#), but also use Common. The halflings, by contrast, speak only Common. Knowledge of [Elder Speech](#) also appears to be common among Mahakam's inhabitants.^{[2][4]}

Traditions

Dwarven culture in Mahakam is highly traditional and conservative, though this is becoming increasingly unpopular among younger dwarves. Everything from the clothes one wears, the food one eats, and even how one acquires a wife is laid down and codified in the Foredwaves' Codex. This Codex contains all dwarven laws and customs and is strictly followed within Mahakam.

This strict adherence is not to everyone's liking. The dwarven youth are increasingly at odds with this state of affairs. To address this, a new tradition was introduced: once a dwarf reaches maturity, they are sent in groups on a [drekthag](#). This is a year-long journey through the lowlands, where they experience life among humans. If a dwarf fails to return to Mahakam by the deadline, they lose all privileges awarded to natives of Mahakam. Only a few dwarves ever fail to return.^{[2][2]}

Another well-known tradition is the [Mahakam Ale Festival](#), which takes place every twenty-five years and attracts thousands of participants from all over the world. This is the only occasion when the gates of Mahakam are opened to everyone. Once the festival ends, the enclave is closed again to all outsiders.

Agriculture

While the dwarves and gnomes are largely uninterested in agriculture, they have begun cultivating mushrooms deep underground—mushrooms that require no sunlight to grow.^[9] Most agricultural activity in Mahakam is carried out by the halflings, who farm the land in the valleys. However, these efforts are not enough to feed all of Mahakam, making food imports from Temeria critical.^[3]

Economy and trade

The dwarves and gnomes of Mahakam possess ancient techniques and advanced machinery used to forge arms and armor of unrivaled quality. Especially well known are the [gwyhrs](#), forged using advanced gnomish technology. Mahakam is the largest known exporter of iron and steel to the [Northern Kingdoms](#) and the [Nilfgaard](#). Mahakam iron is renowned for its quality and is considered the best in the [world](#). Another major export of the mountain realm is precious gemstones.

While Mahakam engages in extensive trade with both the Northern Kingdoms and Nilfgaard, none of the wealth accumulated is used internally. In Mahakam, the only currency in use is copper coins with a hole through them, known as holey gulden. Dwarves receive these as wages and can use them to purchase vittles and hooch; all other needs are provided by their clan. The value of the holey gulden was kept artificially low by the Elder to discourage dwarves from leaving Mahakam.^[2]

National emblems

The current coat of arms and flag are based on the original Czech drawing (the first one above). The second version is also based on that drawing, while the current design draws more inspiration from traditional dwarven shields. The stylized third version appears in [The Witcher Battle Arena](#).

Notable residents

Elders

- [Brouver Hoog](#)

Politicians

- [Barclay Els](#)
- [Yarpen Zigrin](#)

Others

- [Dennis Cranmer](#)
- [Percival Schuttenbach](#)
- [Sheldon Skaggs](#)
- [Yazon Varda](#)
- [Zoltan Chivay](#)

Locations

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| • Mount Carbon
(capital) | • Boro's Rump ^[2] | • Colshtock ^[2] |
| • Craag Ros | • Black Brook Vale ^[2] | • Dragon's Eye ^[2] |
| • Klambat pass | • Langbridge ^[2] | • Gullbratt ^[2] |
| • Mahakam Pass ^[2] | • Twin Peaks ^[2] | • Tall Bridge ^[2] |
| • Davor's Abyss ^[2] | • Drunken Bluff ^[2] | • The Hag's Pit ^[2] |
| • Mare's Islet ^[2] | • Fornlam ^[2] | • Crag Pass ^[2] |
| • Barrow Hill ^[2] | • Lonely Rock ^[2] | • Stoolcap ^[2] |

Trivia

- Mahakam is possibly a reference to [Myrkheim](#)^[W], which is another name for *Niðavellir*, the home of the dwarves in [Norse mythology](#)^[W].
- There is a [Mahakam River](#)^[W] in Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Notes

- In *The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings*, when [Geralt](#) first bumps into [Iorveth](#), he mentions that [Vernon Roche](#) was responsible for the pacification of the foothills. At the end of the game, we can see what Zoltan mentioned in the

novels: the [Nilfgaardian Army](#) passing by without any attack.

- In *The Witcher*, Mahakam is not visited but it is referred to then and again in discussions, books, and journal entries.

References

1. ↑ There's a possibility that the demonym in the books is spelled the same as the location "Mahakam", based on the sentence structure like "Mahakam potato soup" and "Mahakam sihill sword".
2. ↑ [2.00](#) [2.01](#) [2.02](#) [2.03](#) [2.04](#) [2.05](#) [2.06](#) [2.07](#) [2.08](#) [2.09](#) [2.10](#) [2.11](#) [2.12](#) [2.13](#) [2.14](#) [2.15](#) [2.16](#) [2.17](#) [2.18](#) [2.19](#) [2.20](#) [2.21](#) [2.22](#) [2.23](#) [2.24](#) [2.25](#) [2.26](#) [2.27](#) [2.28](#) [2.29](#) *Thronebreaker: The Witcher Tales*
3. ↑ [3.00](#) [3.01](#) [3.02](#) [3.03](#) [3.04](#) [3.05](#) [3.06](#) [3.07](#) [3.08](#) [3.09](#) [3.10](#) *Wiedźmin: Gra Wyobraźni*
4. ↑ [4.0](#) [4.1](#) [4.2](#) [4.3](#) *A Book of Tales*
5. ↑ [5.0](#) [5.1](#) [5.2](#) *Blood of Elves*
6. ↑ [6.0](#) [6.1](#) [6.2](#) *The Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings*
7. ↑ *The World of the Witcher*
8. ↑ *The Last Wish*
9. ↑ [9.0](#) [9.1](#) [9.2](#) [9.3](#) *Gwent: The Witcher Card Game*
10. ↑ *The Lady of the Lake*

Gallery



Mahakam gate



Gullbratt





Tall Bridge



Entrance to Mount Carbon



Mahakam mountains



View of Mount Carbon



Bridge to Black Brook Vale



Mahakam architecture



Mahakam engineers

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